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## REFLECTIONS ON THE CENSUS.

THE census of 1860 is expected to show an increase of population over the census of 1840 of 13,000,000, of which 3,000,000 are actual immigrants, while a large proportion of the total increase represents sons and daughters, or grandsons and grand-daughters of foreigners. Such an extraordinary addition to our national family is well calculated to suggest thought to all classes of reflective minds. Two great social facts are proclaimed by this rush from the East to the West. The old world loses some of the most pauperized and neglected members of its communities, the pitiable victims of defectively Christian, or absolutely pagan systems, yet their exodus clears the moral atmosphere in Europe, even if it does temporarily cloud the moral atmosphere of America. To the great human race, however, it vouchsafes infinite promise of amelioration. A large number of persons become emancipated from the thralldom of pauperism and its concomitants of ignorance and crime, and notwithstanding present generations suffer here from much that is vile and opprobrious in uneducated or deteriorated humanity, posterity at large will be the gainer; the children and grandchildren of hopeless pauperism become, as the census shows, more or less useful members of the family of man, both in social and industrial relations. Yet of the remarkable influence which this exodus is exercising upon the destiny of European and American society we cannot enlarge on this occasion. It is a theme too grand, too solemn, and of too far-reaching moment to be disposed of in a few flippant sentences. To do this comes within the scope of a philosopher rather than within that of a simple observer. But of the romance of the census we may venture to throw out some hints. One broad distinction at once suggests itself to the observing mind. The American in Europe is generally met upon his own ground. However insignificant his individuality, he attracts a certain degree of attention, owing to that peculiar charm which is always attached to natives of distant countries. He never comes under the operation of ordinary estimates of character. He is treated somewhat like an exotic plant. He is approached with curiosity, if not with absolute respect; looked upon, not from the point of view of intrinsic merit and worth, but through the distorted medium of ignorance. He personally anticipates the incense which posterity awards to heroic traditions. The occasion eliminates only the romance in the European mind like that which invests every Greek with the honors due to Zeus alone. In America, however, this applies only to those foreigners who arrive here under some prestige of patriotism, like Kossuth, or of literary fame like Dickens. It would be obviously absurd to associate every Irishman with the genius of Sheridan or the eloquence of Burke, or every German with the poetry of Schiller or the science of Humboldt.

As far as the masses of foreigners are concerned, who contribute so much to swell our population, they have long ceased to offer any charms of novelty. The majority

of them are inferior in education and intelligence to corresponding American classes, and their position in society is naturally governed by this fact. Yet, although crippled mentally, their sentiments present remarkable characteristics. In the Irishman's brains the accumulated scars of centuries of social oppression have made formidable havoc; but his heart is childlike, and through the most grotesque stupidity, there is still apparent the natural goodness of humanity. He blunders with the most innocent unconsciousness. If detected, he evinces not compunction, but surprise. His leer proclaims that a person who expects from him common sense, is, in his opinion, a fool. The soundness of his heart reconciles him to the desolation of his brains, and he seems all the time to chuckle with delight, that he can feel so truly, and at the same time behave so absurdly. In this metaphysical chaos the Irish imagination loves to revel. Now, such remarkable psychological phenomena should be carefully studied. With a physique supported by the diseased potatoes of modern times, and his spiritual nature fed by the rapturous food of the middle ages, the Irishman comes before us in a maze of bewildering inconsistencies, which, although unæsthetic in appearance, are instinct with picturesque philosophy. It should be remembered that every progressive generation of Irishmen loses, under the influence of our institutions, some of the national peculiarities of this nature. See how anxious science is to collect specimens of antediluvian animals, of antediluvian men, and of ancient geological formations. Why, then, not devote to the fossil-link of the wild Irishman, in the human chain of life, similar scrutiny, before he and the soft social soil of our nation become petrifications? So slow are we in eliminating the ideal from the gross reality, that we jostle daily such ambulating incongruities with the utmost indifference; one single exhibition of a Nineveh skeleton of a lion's head with an eagle's wings, puts us, however, in the most remarkable trepidation.

Another chapter of the foreign census shows us the German fresh from his farm in Mechenburg, pitching his tent in Ohio or Illinois. The German's anomalies came not from the heart, but, strange to say, from the mind. Crude as he looks, he is an intellectual fanatic. His disposition to put into action even the most ill-shapen thought, makes him ungainly, unwieldy, angular. His brain is a heavily-laden wagon, and he drives it to the market of his life with the clumsiness, with the drudgery, but also with the honesty of a devoted ox. At times he gasps for breath, and doggedly lies down, but the drops of sweat which ooze from his conscientious brow savor of mental struggle. If he cannot embody all the crotchety wedges of his burly head at the right time, he becomes quarrelsome. As soon, however, as his simple soul is satisfied that he has arrived at a certain quantum of logic or truth, a marvellous change takes place. The last vestige of the ox is gone. He becomes *gemüthlich*, remarkably exhilarated, buoyant, and contented; he lights a fresh pipe, gives a noisy kiss to

*Gretchen*, and drinks *Lagerbier*. A fuller knowledge of the Irish and German nature may prompt to greater discrimination and kindness in the treatment of foreigners. Although bettering their material condition, many of them miss here the habits and thoughts of the fatherland, and for the first generation of immigrants one is always more or less puzzled how to understand the beauty of character common to them as socially constituted like ourselves. The same characteristics exist, with modifications, in other portions of our foreign population.

It must be borne in mind while contemplating immigrants, that the bulk of the better order of immigrants belong almost exclusively to the trading classes of Europe. Not precisely the merchants of Europe, for their number is too limited, and their position is generally too well established to enable them, or to make it desirable for them to emigrate. But agents of merchants, clerks, small traders, jobbers, peddlers, and speculators, chiefly constitute the largest portion of the better order of immigration, with a fair sprinkling of teachers of music and of languages, and a small knot of political exiles or political enthusiasts. The commercial emigrants to this country are doomed in Europe, owing to its peculiar institutions, to a very inferior position in the social scale. They stand outside of what is called good society, which is made up there of the court, the nobility, and a few of the highest clerical, intellectual, and financial notabilities, and some of the higher bureaucracy and military men. For the masses of the smaller commercial men of Europe good society is as little accessible as for day-laborers or farmers. A poor but talented scholar or artist is seen in the best circles of Paris and London, but rarely a small business man, no matter what may be his natural genius. Such exclusive social systems operate fatally upon the habits of thought of the masses of the small commercial men in Europe. Shut out from personal contact with the more cultivated and more refined classes, there is no incitement for the higher aspirations, and the result is that the masses of the small commercial people in Europe are hedged in within the four walls of merely personal interests. To develop their fortunes, and to make their homes and families at ease, is the sole and very natural and laudable object of their life. But they have few aspirations beyond this. Not permitted to mingle on a term of equality with those who act upon the religious, social, political, literary, and artistic interests of the age, their life lies entirely within the narrow compass of self, and the practical result is to make the disposition for anything that does not refer to personal interests or gratification, cynical, trifling, and even skeptical. This must be borne in mind in surveying the romance of the census.

It must be obviously unjust to refer to the poor Irish and German laborers, without saying a word of the circumstances under which the better-off commercial immigrants have been moving in Europe. Besides these commercial strangers, Europe supplies us yearly with a large number of honest mechanics and of persons of various other pur-

suits. But the commercial immigrants make their way easiest in American society. Their home-life here presents in many instances certain characteristics, which, without the concurrence of emigration, can only become known to Americans by personal observation in Europe. Less interested in the general concerns of mankind, they are more devoted to the interests and the enjoyments of their immediate kindred, and hence the German, Irish, and French homes in America partake of much of the beauty for which they are celebrated in their respective mother-countries. Here a world of romance unfolds itself; for, while the children begin to stammer smart and enterprising Yankee words, a smile of sadness is to be seen to glide over the mother's face, while the father actually grows angry at incipient freedom, and determines to have the juvenile American citizens educated abroad. Where one of the social partners is a foreigner, and the other an American, it is curious to observe the tact which one or the other of the parties or both must display to subdue the mischievous proclivity of races and to preserve a good understanding between the belligerent powers. Some of the gipsy genius which American progress presents, is undoubtedly due to international amalgamations of this character, and always to the profit of future society.

We might furnish numerous illustrations of the romance of the Census, and may, perhaps, do so at some future occasion; at present, however, we content ourselves with the foregoing prelude.

So narrow are we in our sympathies, and so careless to cultivate the whole mass of our capabilities, that many persons are to be found who are only alive in the one-half of their human nature, and to whom everything connected with the other is an offence. To some, the Finite, the bounded, the clear, orderly, well-marshalled and thoroughly calculated, is the only element of vital delight. These are statistical souls, whose understandings would rejoice more in numbering the individual peaks of the Alps, than their imagination is impressed by their colossal totality. To others, a luxurious floating in a misty sea of unbounded emotion is the only ecstasy of which life is capable; and a single streak of light in the far distance of a dark horizon will stir in their fancy more pleasurable emotions than all the pillared pomp of Pentelic marble, which the architectural skill of Ictinus piled up in honor of the blue-eyed goddess of the Athenian Acropolis. Such persons cannot read Homer because he is clear; and delight in the elaborately twisted sorrow of Tennyson's "In memoriam," chiefly where it is most artificial and most unintelligible. So various and so contrary are the rich capacities of God's creatures; and so readily does every finite thing, by refusing to acknowledge what is contradictory to its own type, fall into an idol-worship of its own peculiarities.

—J. S. Blackie.

AFTER all, the most natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth. For all beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of a face; and true proportions the beauty of architecture; as true measures that of harmony and music. In poetry, which is all fable, truth still is the perfection.—*Shaftebury.*